

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976".

The motion was adopted.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

12.10 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) **WITHDRAWAL OF LEVY BEEDIES**

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Mukundapuram): I wish to invite the urgent attention of the hon Minister for Industry and Finance, about the serious crisis being faced by the organised bidi industry in the country. Many of these are on the verge of closure. I wish to draw special attention of the Government on the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Industrial Co-operative which provides employment for about 25,000 workers. Sir, this unit is unable to continue production and any day it will be closed.

The Central Government imposed a levy of Rs. 3.60 per 1000 beedies on those manufacturers whose annual output is more than 60 lakh beedies. The result was that many of the private employers manipulated accounts and escaped from the payment of levy. Some others divided their establishment and put different names and kept the production below the levy limits. Some of them who had a good name for their trade mark could not do so and they are facing a crisis since they cannot compete in the market. The net result is that the excise receipts for the government are considerably reduced. Lakhs of workers are thrown out of employment and those who get work are forced to work for nominal wages since they have lost their bargaining power.

Therefore, I request the government to withdraw the levy on beedies and impose a duty on manufactured tobacco so that the government will get more money and the workers will be

saved from the present difficulties.

Till such a step is taken, the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Industrial Co-operative may be exempted from this excise levy. This is the biggest Beedi industrial Co-operative run by the workers in India providing better living conditions and wages. Hence the Government of India must come to its aid forthwith.

(ii) **SHORTAGE OF WATER IN PERIYAR DAM**

SHRI CUMBUM N. NATARAJAN (Perriyakulam): Recently the Kerala State authorities have announced that only 136 feet of water will be stored in the Periyar Dam and the surplus will be diverted to Kerala through a spill-way in the Baby dam.

In this regard I would like to point out that the Central Water and Power Commission has certified the safety of the dam and allowed the storage of 156 feet of water. Therefore, I would like the Minister to give suitable instructions to maintain the storage at 156 feet and stop the move to drain the surplus water through another spill way in Baby dam. A team of engineers from States other than Kerala and Tamil Nadu may be sent to study the safety of the dam. The proposed work in Periyar dam may be stayed till then.

May I request the hon Minister to kindly consider my request and pay immediate attention to this urgent problem and save Tamil Nadu from Famine and drought?

(iii) **REPORTED DILAPIDATED CONDITION OF GANG CANAL IN RAJASTAN**

श्री कुम्भाराम शर्मा : (सीकर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं नियम 377 के अधीन आपके द्वारा निम्नलिखित महत्वपूर्ण विषय सदन के समक्ष रखना चाहता हूँ।

गंग कैनल (जिला श्री गंगानगर, राजस्थान प्रदेश) अत्यधिक जरजरित हो चुकी है क्योंकि इसे बने बहुत समय हो गया है। कैनल का निर्माण आज से पचास वर्ष पहले हुआ था। आज यह क्षत-विक्षत होने के कारण पूरा पानी भी नहीं दे रही है और वर्षा काल में बिखर सकती है। ऐसा हो जाता है तो गंग कैनल

क्षेत्र का हरा भरा इलाका बीरान हो जायेगा और वहाँ का किसान और दुकानदार उजड़ जायेगा जिसको फिर से आबाद करने और क्षेत्र को हरा भरा करने में भारी शक्ति, धन और समय लगा कर भी आज जैसा नहीं बना सकते। इसलिए, सरकार अबिलम्ब ध्यान दे कर गंग कनाल को नया बनाये। नई कनाल बनाने के लिए योजना कार्य और गंग कनाल क्षेत्र को सिंचित रखने के लिए राजस्थान कनाल और भाखड़ा कनाल से सिंचाई की व्यवस्था अबिलम्ब की जाये।

(iv) REPORTED SCARCITY OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES IN WEST BENGAL FOR WANT OF WAGONS

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly): For want of wagons, essential articles like rice, wheat, sugar, rapeseed oil, etc. are not reaching West Bengal. There is not enough stock in the State. A serious situation would arise if foodgrains and other essential articles do not reach West Bengal within two weeks. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has already expressed his anxiety to the above effect. An urgent message has also been sent to the Union Government.

(v) REPORTED DISAPPEARANCE OF CARGO SHRI "M. V. KAIRALI"

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN (Trivandrum): The ship M. V. Kairali of the Kerala Shipping Corporation set sail to Restock in East Germany with iron ore from Marma Goa on 30-6-1979 with 51 people on board. Instead of making a thorough search for the missing vessel the authorities are trying to close the issue in one way or the other and claiming the insurance amount.

Even though, the messages sent by the Corporation were not received in the ship from 4-7-1979 to 6-7-1979

(3 days), the authorities have neither taken any action nor reported the matter to the concerned authorities in time.

On 15-7-1979, a message was received in Naval Control of Shipping Organisation (INS Augro) from an observatory plane "Ship like Kairali is located near Socatra Island Communication trouble all safe". The next day, the Liaison Officer of the Corporation put another version that the ship located is not Kairali but Koyali. But, there is a strong presumption among the family members of the people in the missing ship that the ship located was Kairali and probably that had been hijacked.

This hijacking theory is reinforced by the fact that an Arab Shipping Company came forward with an offer to locate the vessel and crew on board on a "no cure no pay" basis in the very beginning of the disappearance, that is, on 23-7-1979. Even now no fruitful action has been taken on this matter. After a lapse of eight months the Kerala Shipping Corporation or the Government of Kerala have failed to clarify how the vessel disappeared.

Under these circumstances, I request you, the honourable members of this House, the Minister for Shipping and the Prime Minister to look into this matter and do the needful for conducting a thorough investigation to locate the missing vessel, if necessary, even by the Research and Analytic wing of the Government of India and thereby saving the lives of 51 innocent people on board.